(b) the average age of the aircrafts specially those plying on the North-Eastern Sector;

(c) whether Government have any plan to phase-out the aged and almost vintage aircrafts; and

(d) whether Government have any plans to replace the existing fleet with the new aircraft ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) There is no change in the domestic air transport policy. Indian Airlines continues to be the market leader. However, the Civil Aviation Policy under formulation seeks to maintain a competitive civil aviation environment ensuring safety and security. The draft policy has been widely circulated for views/ comments before finalisation.

(b) No specific aircraft as such are dedicated to operate in the North Eastern sector. The average age of aircraft of the domestic airlines are as follows :—

Indian Airlines : 12.8 years

Jet Airways : 3.8 years

Sahara Airlines : 11.8 years

(c) and (d) Indian Airlines has plans to phase out/replace the aged aircraft in its fleet.

Air Traffic Network in Gujarat, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh

†3821. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) the percentage of Gujarat, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh in terms of air traffic and domestic revenue, separately ;

(b) whether there is any fixed norm for implementing the uniform policy for air traffic and flights;

(c) whether Government have taken any concrete steps to introduce air traffic from such airports of these States which are being closed;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) During 1998-1999, the total (both domestic & international) percentage of passenger traffic from Gujarat, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh was 3.5%, 0.3% and 1% respectively. Revenue figures are not maintained State-wise for domestic traffic.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Operators are free to airlink any place in their commercial judgement subject to compliance with the Route Dispersal Guidelines which stipulate certain minimum operations on specified category of routes.

Resumption of IA flights to Kathmandu

3822. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA : SHRI AMAR SINGH : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that IAC has not resumed its flight for Kathmandu as yet and if so, the reasons therefor and by when it is likely to be resumed; and

(b) whether Government had deputed team to ascertain the security arrangement at Kathmandu and if so, the details thereof including the report submitted by that team ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) A team of Civil Aviation experts, which visited Tribhuvan International Airport, Nepal in January, 2000, identified the requirements of security measures for Indian Airlines. Based on the team's report, Government of India have held discussions with His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMGN) regarding additional security measures consistent with international civil aviation practice and procedures Considerable progress has been made but some procedures need to be further refined and finalised before resumption of flights of Indian Airlines to Kathmandu.

Upgradation of domestic airports

3823. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that as per the task force on infrastructure plan, seven domestic airports are to be upgraded to international standards;